

V4 Flying Expert Program
- Short research proposal -

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Anniversaries provide good occasions to draw a balance about the past and assess the opportunities of the future. 2013 is a year of anniversaries and turning points for the Eastern Partnership program. In May the initiative marks its fourth anniversary, by spring the new multi-annual financial framework (MFF) will be finalized and allocations for the new neighborhood policy instruments (European Endowment for Democracy, Civil Society Facility) and for the EaP in particular will be known. Finally in autumn, the Vilnius summit will bring together the Heads of States and Governments to discuss the achievements and the future of the EaP.

This is a good occasion to examine the potentials the EaP will have under the new MFF to achieve its goals. To reach its potential, however, the EaP needs an active pool of support both in the EU and in the Eastern partner countries. In the EU, this support comes mainly from the V4 countries. Hence, my paper will focus on how the V4 countries can capitalize on the new opportunities in order to foster the goals of the Eastern Partnership.

The paper will discuss the policy priorities of the V4 countries in the EaP region and how they fit into the Eastern Partnership initiative. It will identify the strengths and weaknesses of the new setting, and will examine the possibilities of the V4 countries to use this framework and their existing resources to realize the EaP's and their policy goals in the region. To explore the possibilities and intentions of the V4 countries in depth, I will conduct interviews with policy-makers and NGO representatives involved in shaping the EaP in Poland and possibly in other V4 countries (via e-mail, Skype, potentially in person). The paper will conclude with policy recommendations for V4 decision-makers, making the policy paper an especially timely contribution ahead of the Vilnius summit.

As OSW currently has a limited number of publications in English concerning the EaP *per se*, this paper can be a valuable contribution to the Center's work. Additionally, studying the V4 perspectives and the issue of the EaP will allow me to engage both with the experts dealing with Central Europe and with Eastern Europe, thus I could make the most out of the institutional cooperation.